REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 16, 2006. Claims 1 to 26, 29, 30 and 33 to 47 remain pending in the application, with Claims 27, 28, 31 and 32 having been cancelled. Claims 41 to 47 have been withdrawn from further consideration due to a restriction requirement. Claims 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 29, 33 and 35 are the independent claims currently under consideration. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 3, 5, 9, 12 to 15, 18, 23 to 25 and 27 to 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,378,070 (Chan), Claims 4 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chan in view of Newton, Claims 6 to 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 37 and 38 were rejected under § 103(a) over Chan, and Claims 39 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chan in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,195,420 (Tognazzini). The rejections are respectfully traversed and the Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in light of the following comments.

The present invention relates to printing by hotel guests. In the invention, a hotel guest uploads print data to a printing service provider by connecting a laptop (or other portable type computing device) in their hotel room to a network connection. A hotel server detects the connection, and assigns a network address (e.g., an IP address) to the laptop client computer. The hotel guest then performs an operation to upload the print data to the print service provider (PSP) server. At the same time, the assigned network address is also uploaded to the PSP server transparent to the hotel guest. Thus, the network address identifies a specific location (hotel room) from which the uploading process is performed. The PSP server stores the uploaded print data and location information, and then queries

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the hotel server for user identification information of the hotel guest corresponding to the uploaded location information. The hotel server responds to the query by providing the user identification information (e.g., hotel room key information or credit card information of the registered hotel guest) to the PSP server. The PSP server receives the user identification information from the hotel server and stores the received user identification information in correspondence with the uploaded print data. Then, when the hotel guest wants to print their print job, they go to a printer in the hotel and input their user identification information (e.g., swipe their room key or credit card, input a password, etc.) at the printer. The input user identification information is transmitted from the printer to the PSP server, whereby the PSP server transmits the print data to the printer for printing.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 1 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information and location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is performed, determining, from the uploaded location information, user identification information of a user corresponding to the uploaded location information, correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined user identification information of the user corresponding to the uploaded location information with the uploaded print data information, inputting the user identification information at a printing device connected to the network, transmitting the print data information having the correlated user identification information from the printing service provider to the printing device, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Claim 29 is a computer medium claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 1.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1 and 29, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, via a network, to a printing service provider, print data information and location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is performed, determining, from the uploaded location information, user identification information of a user corresponding to the uploaded location information, and correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined user identification information with the uploaded print data information.

Chan merely teaches retrieving a secure print job using a smart card. According to the patent, a print job is encrypted using private/public keys of a user and the job is uploaded to a print server where the job is securely stored. When a user inserts their smart card in a reader at a printer, the user's information contained on the smart card is transmitted to the print server, whereby the print server decrypts the print job and transmits the job to the printer. Thus, Chan, at best, merely teaches uploading the user's information together with the print data, and then printing the print job at a printer when the user inputs their identification information at the printer. Chan however, fails to teach the claimed processes of uploading location information corresponding to a location where the uploading is performed with the print data, and then determining user identification information based on the uploaded location information, and correlating the determined user identification information with the print data.

In this regard, the Office Action alleges that, because a TCP/IP connection is made between devices when the print data is uploaded, the IP address of one device is inherently uploaded to the other device. While this may be true in some respects, the

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succeeding determining and correlating steps are not performed by Chan. That is, once the print data is uploaded, the TCP/IP connection is broken off and the IP address of the device making the connection is not stored in conjunction with the print data. As a result, there simply is not way for Chan to use a stored IP address (i.e., uploaded location information corresponding to a location where the uploading is performed) so as to then perform the claimed steps of determining user identification information corresponding to the uploaded location information, and to then correlate the determined user identification information with the stored print data and location information. Accordingly, Claims 1 and 29 are not anticipated by Chan.

Newton and Tognazzini have been studied but are not seen to add anything that, when combined with Chan, would have resulted in the features of uploading, via a network, to a printing service provider, print data information and location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is performed, determining, from the uploaded location information, user identification information of a user corresponding to the uploaded location information, and correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined user identification information with the uploaded print data information. In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, independent Claims 1 and 29, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

Claims 9 and 14 are directed to the respective servers that perform the various functions of the invention. Specifically, Claim 9 is directed to the hotel server and thus is a server apparatus that performs computer executable process steps for printing over a network, comprising a processor for executing computer executable process steps, and a memory medium storing the computer executable process steps, the computer executable

process steps comprising (a) detecting connection of a client computer to a local area network connected to the server apparatus, (b) assigning a network address to the detected client computer, (c) receiving a query from another server apparatus connected to the network for user identification information corresponding to the assigned network address, (d) determining the user identification information corresponding to the assigned network address received in the query, and (e) responding to the query from the another server apparatus with the determined user identification information.

Claim 14 is directed to the print service provider server and thus is a server apparatus that performs computer executable process steps for printing over a network, comprising a processor for executing computer executable process steps, and a memory medium storing the computer executable process steps, the computer executable process steps comprising (a) receiving, via the network, uploaded print data information and location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is performed, (b) querying another server apparatus corresponding to the uploaded location information for user identification information of a user corresponding to the uploaded location information, (c) receiving the user identification information from the another server apparatus in response to the query, (d) storing the received user identification information of the user corresponding to the uploaded location information in correspondence with the uploaded print data information, (e) receiving the user identification information from a printing device, and (f) in response to the received user identification information from the printing device, transmitting to the printing device the print data information stored in correspondence to the user identification information.

The applied art is also not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 9 and 14. With regard to Claim 9, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a server that receives a query from another server apparatus connected to a network for user identification information corresponding to a network address assigned by the server to a client computer upon detection by the server of the client computer being connected to a area network, the server determining the user identification information corresponding to the assigned network address received in the query, and responding to the query from the another server apparatus with the determined user identification information. With regard to Claim 14, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a server receiving, via the network, uploaded print data information and location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is performed, querying another server apparatus corresponding to the uploaded location information for user identification information of the user corresponding to the location information, receiving the user identification information from the another server apparatus in response to the query, and storing the received user identification information of the user corresponding to the uploaded location information in correspondence with the uploaded print data information.

As discussed above, while Chan may provide a TCP/IP address when devices are connected, Chan does not teach that the TCP/IP address is then used in a query to another server to determine user identification information corresponding a user of a location from which the uploading is performed. Accordingly, Claims 9 and 14, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are also not believed to be anticipated by Chan. The other

references also fail to teach the foregoing features and therefore, Claims 9 and 14, as well as the claims dependent therefrom are therefore believed to be allowable.

Claim 18 includes features along the lines of Claim 1, but is directed to an aspect of the invention in which key information (e.g., hotel room key information) is determined in place of the identification information of Claim 1. Specifically, Claim 18 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information, location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is being performed, and user identification information corresponding to the location information, determining key information based on the uploaded user identification information, and correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined key information with the uploaded print data information, inputting the key information at a printing device connected to the network, transmitting the print data information having the correlated key information from the printing service provider to the printing device, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claim 18, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information, location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is being performed, and user identification information corresponding to the location information, determining key information based on the uploaded user identification information, and correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined key information with the uploaded print data information.

As stated above, Chan does not upload location information with print data, and then use the location information corresponding to a location from which the uploading is being performed to determine user identification information. Along these same lines, Chan does not teach that the uploaded location information is used to determine key information, that is then correlated with the uploaded print data. Rather, in Chan, the key information (which is encryption key information) is uploaded as part of the print job. Therefore, there is no need to determine key information from uploaded location information and Chan fails to do so. Therefore, Claim 18 is also believed not to be anticipated by Chan and are therefore believed to be allowable.

Claim 35 is directed to another related aspect of the invention regarding printing by hotel guests. Specifically, Claim 35 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, to a printing service provider, print data information and corresponding hotel guest information, inputting, at a printing device, the hotel guest information, transmitting the input hotel guest information to the printing service provider, the printing service provider transmitting the uploaded print data information corresponding to the input hotel guest information to the printing device in response to the inputting step, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claim 35, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, to a printing service provider, print data information and corresponding hotel guest information, inputting, at a printing device, the hotel guest information, transmitting the input hotel guest information to the printing service provider, and the printing service provider

transmitting the uploaded print data information corresponding to the input hotel guest information to the printing device in response to the inputting step.

As discussed above, Chan uploads intended recipient identification information with the print job, where the identification information is obtained from the recipient's smart card. Chan fails to disclose or to suggest that the intended recipient's information is hotel guest information corresponding to the print data. Indeed, it has not been known for hotels to issue their guests smart-cards as are used in Chan, but rather, hotels often issue a plastic key card with a magnetic strip as a key. Thus, one would not have been able to make the leap from the use of smart-cards being used for hotel guests. Thus, Claim 35, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable over Chan.

Claims 24 and 33 are directed to another related aspect of the invention regarding restricting use of particular printers to registered users. Specifically, Claim 24 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information and associated user identification information, inputting the user identification information at a printing device connected to the network, determining whether a user corresponding to the user identification information input at the printing device in the inputting step is registered as a user who is authorized to print at the printing device, in a case where the determining step determines that the user is not a registered user who is authorized to print at the printing device, informing the user that they are not authorized to print at the printing device, in a case where the determining step determines that the user is registered as a user who is authorized to print at the printing device, transmitting the print data information having

associated user identification information corresponding to the input user identification information to the printing device, and printing the transmitted print data information on the printing device.

Claim 33 is a computer medium claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 24.

Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 24 and 33, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of determining whether a user corresponding to user identification information input at a printing device is registered as a user who is authorized to print at the printing device, in a case where the determining step determines that the user is not a registered user who is authorized to print at the printing device, informing the user that they are not authorized to print at the printing device, in a case where the determining step determines that the user is registered as a user who is authorized to print at the printing device, transmitting the print data information having associated user identification information corresponding to the input user identification information to the printing device.

Chan merely utilizes user identification information input at a printer via a smart-card to determine if a print job is pending, and if so, prints out the print job. However, Chan is not seen to determine whether or not the user is registered as a user who is authorized to use the printing device. Presumably, so long as a print job is pending for the user, it will be printed out, regardless of whether or not the user is authorized to use the particular printer. As a result, in Chan, users may utilize unauthorized printers to print out their print job. In contrast, the invention of Claims 24 and 33 provides a way to restrict use of printers within the network by having all users register to use particular printers, and

then associating particular printers with each user. Thus, when the user inputs their identification information at a printer, a determination is made whether or not the user is authorized to use the particular printer. Chan simply fails to teach any such registration or authorization determination feature. Accordingly, Claims 24 and 33, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are also believed to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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